Russians, U.S. Agree On A-Pact

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The United States and the Soviet Union yesterda offered a complete and agreed-on draft treaty that th hope will halt the spread of nuclear weapons to natio other than the five already possessing them.

The agreement, after more than a decade of discussi and after two years of intensive negotiations, was made public here and at the Geneva disarmament conference, which resumed yesterday.

The key move was Soviet acceptance of a device that, it is hoped, will meld the inspection systems of Euratom, the six-nation Western European atomic energy agency, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), affiliated with the United Nations Here the Soviet Union accepted, verbatim, language first suggested by West Germany last Nov. 2 at a NATO conference, American officials said.

Last August when the United States and the Soviet Union first offered a draft treaty, the inspection section, Article III, was left blank because of disagreement. That has now been filled in and a number of other articles have been revised.

Welcomed by Johnson

President Johnson, who welcomed the treaty as a "landmark in the effort of mankind to avoid nuclear disaster," had hoped to announce the agreement in his State of the Union message Wednesday evening.

But word of the Soviets' agreement was withheld for their own reasons and did not reach the White House until 4:25 a.m. yesterday, Washington time.

The draft is now subject to further negotiation but the two superpowers hope that only minor changes remain to be made before it can be opened for formal signatures. Mr. Johnson wants to present it to the Senate for approval later this year.

France and China will not sign the treaty although Britain will. However, others who sign will be obliged not only to refrain from making their own nuclear weapons but also to refuse such weapons from any of the five nuclear powers.

'An Important Step'

In a Geneva dispatch to The Washington Post, David Egli reported that Soviet delegate Andrei Roshchin called the agreement "an important step forward which opens the way towards a speedy conclusion of the treaty."

Other delegates at Geneva, representing Britain, Canada, Mexico, Italy and India, likewise welcomed the move. But there were as yet no commitments from the non-nuclear nations, especially from West Germany, India, Japan, Italy, Israel and Egypt.

If successful, and American officials were in an optimistic mood here yesterday, this will be the third international agreement to control nuclear weapons in one form or another. The others were the 1963 limited nuclear test ban treaty and the 1967 treaty to ban such weapons from outer space.

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In the present draft, the inspection clause issue was resolved this way: every nation signing the treaty must accept a system of safeguards, basically on-the-spot inspection to make sure they are not diverting the raw material of weapons which is produced in nuclear power plants. This will be negotiated within two years, after signature, with the IAEA.

However, such negotiations may either be by a single nation with IAEA or by a group of nations, meaning by Euratom, which includes Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux nations.

The assumption is that in two years' time a form of IAEA inspection of the Euratom inspection system can be agreed upon. However, there is no provision for what happens if negotiations stalemate. At present, more than 20 non-Communist nations plus Yugoslavia have agreements under which IAEA inspects power and research reactors.

There is no requirements for inspection of reactors in the United States, the Soviet Union or Britain. The Soviets will not accept that, but non-weapons plants here and in Britain are in some cases inspected.

American officials took pains to stress their view that the treaty draft is not simply another example of Soviet-American cooperation or just a big-power agreement to make permanent the second-class status of the non-nuclear nations.

They pointed to a number of concessions made in this draft as a result of objections by the middle-level nations—such as India, Germany, Japan and Brazil—to the draft made public in August that was complete except for the inspection clause.

One concession was to put a time limit on the duration of the treaty through the device of calling for a review conference after 25 years "to decide whether the treaty shall continue in force indefinitely." There were indications yesterday that if the non-nuclear nations argue forcefully enough the 25-year period could be reduced to 20 years.

On the issue of security guarantees by nuclear powers to non-nuclear states — most specifically, by the United States and-or the Soviet Union to India—the treaty is silent. This is expected to be a major problem with India, which worries about China's growing nuclear arsenal but does not want any formal security treaty with either Moscow or Washington.

Other non-nuclear nations are covered by bilateral or regional security pacts with either the United States or the Soviet Union. The hope here and in Moscow is that these current arrangements will suffice.

In the case of India and perhaps some others, however, both Moscow and Washington have indicated they will try to meet the problem through some form of United Nations Security Council resolution. American officials are wary of any new formal commitment because they know Congress is in no mood now for further American pledges.

Yesterday's draft treaty also contains a strengthened pledge that the nuclear powers will make nuclear devices available to those who want them for peaceful purposes. A nuclear device for digging a canal, for example, is the same as that in a nuclear bomb and hence could not be manufactured under terms of the treaty by any but the nuclear powers.

Many of the non-nuclear nations have been demanding that the big powers cut down on their own weapons if nuclear arms are to be denied the smaller countries. As a device to satisfy this demand, and to counter the argument that the big powers simply want to close the doors to the nuclear club, the treaty has a clause pledging that the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain will "pursue negotiations in good faith" to achieve "cessation of the nuclear arms race and disarmament."

However, despite a year of urging by Washington, Moscow has thus far refused to set a date even to begin talks on how to curb the current missile and anti-missile arms race.

The treaty allows any nation to withdraw, with three months advance notice to the U.N. Security Council, whenever it considers that "extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country." This is identical with the language used in the test ban treaty, with the addition of the notice to the U.N.